

Charles Goddard, Bureau of Hazardous Waste
Berton Mead, Region 6
PCB Contamination at Universal Waste, City of Utica, Oneida County

April 5, 1979

On April 3, 1979, after receiving results from samples taken in 1977 from the subject site, members of my staff made a follow-up investigation at the site. They met with Messrs. Joseph Jiampietro and Joseph Alberico, President and Vice-President, respectively of Universal Waste. Mr. Jiampietro was cooperative in answering questions and anxious to solve any problems connected with Universal Waste.

Universal Waste is a salvage company in the business of concentrating scrap metal for resale. Part of their business involves salvaging metals from used electrical transformers. Mr. Jiampietro said that all their transformers are bought indirectly from Niagara Mohawk Power Corp. He contends that their transformers are drained prior to acquisition.

Universal Waste has been at its present site since 1957. Prior to that, the site, along with the surrounding area, was used as the Utica dump. This area is in an active flood plain.

The Mohawk River skirts along the northern and western boundary of the 20+ acre site. A storm sewer runs underground from west to east through the middle of the site and into an open ditch which dumps in the Mohawk River. This same storm sewer drains another scrap metal dealer, Empire Recycling, and an area that Westinghouse's transformer repair shop sat on. We believe that all three facilities do, or did in the past, handle and dispose of PCB's. The three facilities are within 2,000 feet of each other.

Seven earth and sediment samples were taken in 1977 for PCB analysis. Six surface samples (6" depth) were taken from the Universal Waste site and one from the ditch sediment off site.

Samples #1, 2, 3, and 4 were taken generally as background samples. Sample #5 was taken next to a pile of old capacitors and sample #6 was taken next to a pile of old barrels. Sample #5 had an accumulation value of +50,000 ppm PCB and #6 had a value of +30,000 ppm PCB. Sample #7, taken from the open ditch sediment off site, had an accumulation value of +68 ppm PCB. Sample #10 and 11, taken from the storm sewer discharge pipes, also had high values of trichloroethylene.

